

VERMONT COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



**IMPROVING VERMONTERS' LIVES
THROUGH VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

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VERMONT COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

103 South Main Street, 1st Floor-4 North, Waterbury, Vermont 05671

Telephone 802-241-4244 – Facsimile 801-241-4461

www.vtcncs.vermont.gov

The Vermont Commission on National and Community Service was established by Executive Order 05-98 on November 30, 1993 by Governor Howard Dean. The Governor appoints up to 25 individuals to serve three-year terms as members of the Commission. The Commission promotes, supports, and recognizes volunteerism and community service throughout Vermont.

Activities include:

- Select, monitor, and evaluate state AmeriCorps programs
- Provide technical assistance and support to commission funded programs, and whenever possible to all Corporation funded programs
- Provide opportunities to recognize the efforts of volunteers and organizations who contribute to meeting the needs of their communities
- Update a plan of service for the state annually
- Build on existing resources and networks to integrate training, technical assistance, funding, and other support for all state community service organizations
- Facilitate access to information needed by organizations and individuals regarding service opportunities and programs throughout the state

The commission has three full-time and one part-time staff members. The staff manages the budget, plans and executes training and recognition events, administers grants for Vermont's six AmeriCorps State programs, monitors those programs to ensure compliance with federal regulations, promotes inclusion within the programs, and play a vital role in the state's emergency plan operations.

COMMISSIONERS

John Turner, Chair

Ann-Marie Small, Co-Chair

Alice Astarita, Tanya Avilova, Lynn Bedell, John Coutley, Wendy Cunningham,
Jean Luc Dushime, J. Guy Isabelle, Katheryn Laferriere, Benjamin Luna,
Matt Mulligan, Leslie Salmon, William Tortolano, Marie Whitbeck



EX-OFFICIO

Susan Cheesman

CNCS Tri-State Office Representative

STAFF

Executive Director Gretchen Berger-Wabuti

Program Officer Martha Faber

Training Officer Liz Lepore

Inclusion Officer Emily Trantum



COMMISSION FUNDING 2008-2009

Administrative	\$125,000
2008 Unobligated funds	9,248
Total Administrative	\$134,248
Training	\$ 94,461
2009 Supplemental funds	25,278
Total Training	\$119,739
Disability	\$ 43,929
2008 Unobligated funds	8,850
Total Disability	\$ 52,779
Total Commission Funding 2009	\$306,766

AMERICORPS*STATE PROGRAM FUNDING 2008-2009

CEDO WAB	We All Belong - Community Economic and Development Office	\$276,624
DREAM	Directing through Recreation, Education, Adventure and Mentoring	\$231,999
N2N	Neighbor to Neighbor	\$251,999
NEKI	Northeast Kingdom Initiative	\$186,302
VHCB	Vermont Housing and Conservation Board	\$378,001
VYDC	Vermont Youth Development Corps	\$252,000
Total AmeriCorps Program Funding 2009		\$1,576,925

Commission Funding:	\$ 306,766
AmeriCorps Program Funding:	\$1,576,925
Local Match:	\$ 164,672
State Match:	\$ 48,191
Total	\$2,096,554

AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that engage Americans in intensive service to meet the nation's critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment.

In Vermont more than **3,800** people of all ages and backgrounds are helping to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through **34** national service projects across Vermont. Serving with national and local nonprofits, schools, faith-based organizations and other groups, these citizens tutor and mentor children, coordinate after-school programs, build homes, conduct neighborhood patrols, restore the environment, respond to disasters, build nonprofit capacity and recruit and manage volunteers. This year, the Corporation for National and Community Service will commit more than **\$5,500,000** to support Vermont communities through three national service initiatives. The Corporation for National and Community Service improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. Each year, the Corporation engages more than four million Americans in service to meet local needs through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America.

This year AmeriCorps will provide more than **320** individuals the opportunity to provide intensive, results-driven service to meet education, environmental, public safety and other pressing needs in communities across Vermont. Roughly three-quarters of all AmeriCorps grant funding goes to the Governor-appointed Vermont Commission on National and Community Service, which in turn awards grants to nonprofit groups to respond to local needs. Most of the remainder of the grant funding is distributed by the Corporation directly to multi-state and national organizations through a competitive grants process. Other individuals will serve through AmeriCorps VISTA, whose members help bring individuals and communities out of poverty by serving full-time to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses and increase housing opportunities, and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), a 10-month, full time residential program for men and women between the ages of 18 and 24. In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award of up to \$5,350 that can be used to pay for college or to pay back qualified student loans. Since 1994, more than **2,900** Vermont residents have qualified for AmeriCorps Education Awards totaling more than **\$10,100,000**.¹



THE AMERICORPS PLEDGE

**I will get things done for America –
to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.**

**I will bring Americans together
to strengthen our communities.**

Faced with apathy,

I will take action.

Faced with conflict,

I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity,

I will persevere.

**I will carry this commitment with me
this year and beyond.**

**I am an AmeriCorps member,
and I will get things done.**

¹ http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/state_profiles_detail.asp?tbl_profiles_state=VT

NATIONAL SERVICE IN VERMONT

2008-2009 AmeriCorps*State Programs

The Vermont Commission on National and Community Service (VT CNCS) administers funding to the state's six AmeriCorps national service programs and promotes, supports, and recognizes volunteerism and community service throughout Vermont. The commission consists of 15 governor-appointed citizens working with a staff of four housed in the Agency of Human Services. AmeriCorps is a national initiative that involves people of all ages and backgrounds in strengthening America's communities through service. Currently, over 20,000 AmeriCorps members serve full or part-time in more than 350 AmeriCorps programs nationwide. In exchange for service, members may receive a living allowance and/or an education award.

Community and Economic Development Office - We All Belong – CEDO

The Community and Economic Development Office is a department of the City of Burlington. Their main tasks are focused on helping citizens and institutions in Burlington understand how the invisible barriers of race and class keep people in poverty. Programming strives to eliminate the barriers that keep people in poverty. AmeriCorps members serve in the school districts, non-profit agencies and other city departments making changes from within each institution. Member-led activities increase participation in schools, extracurricular programs, community events, summer programs, and foster a greater understanding among the community of the different ethnic groups living in Burlington. CONTACT: Beth Truzansky, 802-865-7178; email btruzansky@ci.Burlington.vt.us

Directing through Recreation, Education, Adventure, and Mentoring - DREAM

DREAM's mission is to build communities of families and college students that empower children from disadvantaged circumstances to recognize their options, make informed decisions, and achieve their dreams. DREAM pairs college students with children (K-12) living in public housing developments. DREAM's mentors form long-lasting (3 to 4 years) one-on-one mentoring relationships with the children through a combination of group activities, trips, events, and a weekly program. CONTACT: Mike Loner, 802-655-9015; email mloner@dreamprogram.org

Neighbor to Neighbor - N2N

N2N AmeriCorps members serve elders and people with disabilities, helping them live independently while aging successfully. Members are hosted at Vermont's Area Agencies on Aging in Burlington, St. Johnsbury, Barre, and Rutland, and perform in-home services, lead programs about healthy living, and organize intergenerational events. Members also strengthen community partnerships that connect local organizations, schools, and faith-based groups with elders and people with disabilities. CONTACT: Nancy Sherman, 802-476-2674; email nsherman@cvcoa.org

NATIONAL SERVICE IN VERMONT

2008-2009 AmeriCorps*State Programs

- continued -

Northeast Kingdom Initiative – NEKI

A multi-site rural program, NEKI members serve in local schools, libraries, community-based organizations and environmental education centers in Orleans, Essex and Caledonia counties. Our focus is literacy, out-of-school and after-school programming, and positive youth development. CONTACT: Anne Brown, 802-626-6357; email Anne.Brown@lsc.vsc.edu

Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps - VHCB AC

VHCB AmeriCorps program's dual goals are to create more stable affordable housing opportunities while preserving the natural and working landscape by fostering a greater appreciation of and responsibility for the environment. VHCB members provide direct assistance to homeless individuals and families, education and support for first-time homebuyers, foreclosure prevention, programming and residential services for youth and families residing in subsidized housing developments, environmental education, land stewardship, and energy efficiency/weatherization education and services. VHCB members serve with community land trusts, homeownership centers, homeless shelters, and conservation organizations. CONTACT: Joan Marie Misek, 802-828-3249; email Joan@vhcb.org

Vermont Youth Development Corps – VYDC

VYDC is sponsored by the Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys and Girls Club. This statewide national service program places AmeriCorps*State members at community-based youth organizations (e.g., after-school programs, teen centers, alternative schools) throughout Vermont that champion positive, skill-building opportunities for young people. VYDC members plan and implement high-quality social, recreational, cultural, and service programs for youth. VYDC members help youth build strong connections to their communities and develop assets they need to make healthy choices. All activities include youth as partners and encourage youth leadership. CONTACT: M. Kadie Schaeffer, 802-229-9151; email vyt.vydc@gmail.com

The logo features the text "United We Serve" in a large, white, serif font, centered within a blue rectangular box. Below this, a smaller white serif font contains a quote from the President. The entire graphic is set against a dark blue background.

United We Serve

The President is calling on all Americans to participate in our nation's recovery and renewal by serving in our communities. There are many ways to get involved. America's new foundation will be built one community at a time – and it starts with you.



The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (H.R. 1388) received final passage by the House on March 31, 2009 by a vote of 275-149. President Barack Obama signed the Serve America Act into law on April 21, 2009.

The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act is landmark legislation that charges the Corporation for National and Community Service and our partners to dramatically expand opportunities for Americans to serve, to focus on critical national issues, to be a catalyst for social innovation, and to support the nonprofit sector. The law both expands our existing programs and creates new initiatives to increase service opportunities and strengthen our civic infrastructure.



Civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. recognized the power of service to strengthen communities and achieve common goals. Initiated by Congress in 1994, King Day of Service builds on that legacy by transforming the federal holiday honoring Dr. King into a national day of community service grounded on his teachings of nonviolence and social justice. The aim is to make the holiday a day ON, where people of all ages and backgrounds come together to improve lives, bridge social barriers, and move our nation closer to the “Beloved Community” that Dr. King envisioned.

GOVERNOR'S OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS



The Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Service awards ceremony was held on April 26, 2009. This is an annual event sponsored by the Vermont Commission on National and Community Service (VT CNCS) that honors dedicated Vermonters, including individuals, groups and businesses that best exemplify the spirit of volunteerism and community service in Vermont. VT CNCS works to foster a culture of volunteerism in Vermont through the administration of AmeriCorps national service programs and promoting volunteer service in Vermont.

Governor Douglas is a strong supporter of community service and honors "Vermont's rich heritage of volunteers who have dedicated themselves to protecting and preserving our environment, mentoring young people, feeding the hungry, assisting the homeless, donating time and money to nonprofits, serving in local civic organizations, and countless other services." Patrick Flood, Deputy Secretary of the Agency of Human Services, also attended the awards ceremony, thanked the recipients for their service, and spoke about the importance of volunteers in this time of great need.

At the 2009 ceremony, 92 Vermonters received Outstanding Volunteer Service awards. Each award certificate is signed by Governor Jim Douglas and at the ceremony the Governor personally presents each honoree with their award in recognition of their spirit of volunteerism. Approximately 200 individuals, including family and friends of the recipients, attended this year's ceremony to honor these generous and selfless Vermonters.

Every service award recipient undergoes a nomination process, beginning with a nominator who completes a nomination form and writes a supporting essay. A panel of Commissioners from the Vermont Commission on National and Community Service then reads the nominations and makes recommendations. To learn more about this event and/or how to nominate a volunteer for a Governor's Service Award in 2010 please visit <http://vtcncs.vermont.gov>. If you're interested in volunteering in your community and you would like more information you may contact the Vermont Commission on National and Community Service at 802-241-4244.

LAUNCH “KICKOFF”



The Vermont AmeriCorps Launch “Kickoff” was held on October 14, 2008 at the State House in Montpelier, Vermont. Over 150 AmeriCorps members from across the state attended the event to “kickoff” their new service year. Members were welcomed into service and provided with an overview of the programs throughout the State. The Launch provides an opportunity for members to network statewide and regionally. Members worked in teams to assemble fleece blankets for distribution to needy Vermonters and assisted with gardening projects at Montpelier High School.

7TH ANNUAL NATIONAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

Growing Hope & Strengthening Vermont Communities



The 7th Annual National Service Conference was held on May 4 and 5, 2009 in Stowe, Vermont. Over 150 members from across the state came together for this two-day event that focused on service. Our theme this year was “Growing Hope & Strengthening Vermont Communities”. This event enables AmeriCorps members to learn, network, and share the successes and challenges that they experienced while serving in Vermont.

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